THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) No, Sir. As soon as the said proposal was received form Govt. of Andhra Pradesh in December, 1998 they were duly informed of the modifications that were being envisaged in Govt. of India's Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools (CLASS) scheme and therefore were requested to await the clearance of the modified CLASS scheme. Processing of modified CLASS scheme is at an advance stage of clearance. As soon as it is cleared, the proposal of Govt. of Andhra Pradesh would be examined in the light of the modified CLASS scheme.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Disinvestment in Public Sector Fertilizer Plants

3652. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the plants producing fertilizers in the public sector which have been identified for privatisation or disinvestment;

(b) to what extent the production would be affected by such uncertainty;

(c) whether there is a proposal to close down some public sector fertilizer plants; and

(d) if so, the names of such plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Based on the recommendations of the Disinvestment Commission, Government have decided to disinvest 51% of NFL's equity and 32.74% of its equity in MFL out of Current 58.74% holding through sale to a strategic buyer along with transfer of management control. In case of both the Companies, the process of selection of global adviser/merchant banker through global tendering is underway. In case of four other public sector Companies, namely FACT, PPCL, PPI and RCF, which have been identified for disinvestment, the process is at an initial stage of seeking approvals.

It is envisaged that disinvestment and resultant change in ownership shall not affect production of these plants and shall instead, exert pressure on the Companies to further improve performance, enhance efficiency, achieve higher profits and face the market challenge.

(c) and (d) Action with regard to Public Sector Undertaking (PSUs) in fertilizer sector is to be taken keeping in view the declared policy of the Government of India towards the public sector which is restructuring and revive potentially viable PSUs and close down those (PSUs) which cannot be revived while fully protecting the interests of workers.

Export Promotion Council for Bulk Drugs

3653. SHRI DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a meeting held by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers on 17th March, 1998, a decision had been taken to have a separate export promotion council for bulk drugs and pharmaceuticals;

(b) if so; what follow-up action is being taken by government;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh has sent any request to establish the headquarters of the said Council at Hyderabad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the status of the request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) A meeting to consider this matter was held in the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers on March 17, 1998. Such decisions are taken by Government after appropriate inter-Ministerial consultation. Government have not decided to have a separate export promotion council for pharmaceuticals.

(c) and (d) The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has suggested that the headquarters of the Export Promotion Council for pharmaceuticals should be located at Hyderabad. Since no decision for a separate export promotion council for pharmaceuticals has been taken, no action has been possible on the suggestion of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

Procurement of Urea Strippers by RCF

3654. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 149, given in Rajya Sabha on 25th February, 2000 and state:

(a) whether decision to procure Urea Strippers by RCF has since been taken; and

(b) if so, the name of the firm with whom the order has been placed, with price and detailed terms and conditions thereof?